

How to Write a Critique for a Theatrical Performance

A critique is an evaluation of a performance of a show. It should contain five paragraphs.

1. Paragraph 1—The Basics

Include the answers to the five W's:

- Who (the playwright, directors, and actors)
- What (the title of the play)
- Where (the name of the school or theater)
- When (when did you see it?)
- Why (In a few sentences, state the basic theme of the show)

2. Paragraph 2—The Plot

Briefly summarize the plot of the show:

- How well did the story work?
- Was it interesting, entertaining?
- Did you like the actual script?

3. Paragraph 3—The Acting

Reactions to the performers playing the characters in the play:

- Use their real names and character names
- Were they believable?
- How was their volume and articulation?
- Did their gestures and body movement stay true to the character?

4. Paragraph 4—The Design

Set:

- Did it establish a definite mood and correct time period for the play?

Lights:

- Did they convey appropriate mood, emphasis, and brightness?

Costumes and Makeup:

- Were they true to the period of the show and to the characters?

Sound:

- How did the sound effects and music contribute to the show's mood?
- If this performance was a musical, what is your opinion of the orchestra's performance?

5. Paragraph 5—The Reaction

What is the play's effect on the audience?

- Was the audience attentive?
- Was the audience interested?
- What was your opinion of the show as a whole?

6. Remember to:

- Back up all your opinions with valid reasons.
- Be objective, fair, and sincere.
- Evaluate the entire production.
- Be constructive. Indicate good points along with those you felt needed improvement.
- Enjoy the show—don't go to be overly critical.